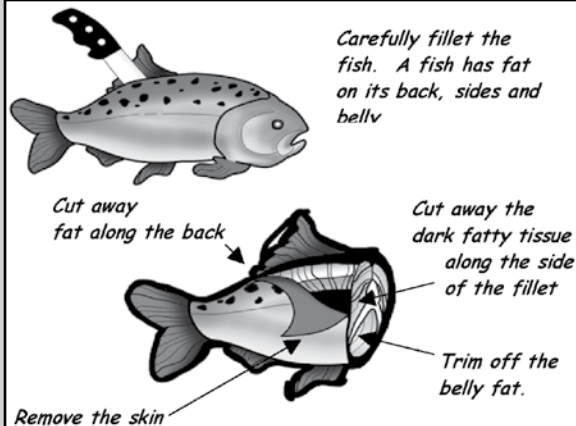


How should I clean and cook fish?

- ✓ Trim away fatty areas.
- ✓ Do not eat the organs, head, skin, or dark fatty tissue along the backbone, sides and belly.
- ✓ Remove or puncture the fish's skin before cooking. This allows fat to drain off and helps to remove or reduce the fat under the skin.
- ✓ Cook so the fat drips away by baking, broiling, or grilling on a rack. Throw away the fat and drippings.
- ✓ Deep frying is not a good way to remove chemical contamination. However, if you deep-fry fish, trim the fat away first. After frying, drain and throw away the oil.
- ✓ Fish that are low in contaminants should be used when frying fish in butter or making fish soups and stews.



OTHER AVAILABLE BROCHURES

- Guide to Safe Fish Consumption
- Avoid Mercury in Fish and Seafood
- Michigan Family Fish Consumption Guide

Available at:
www.michigan.gov/mdch-toxic
or by calling 1-800-MI-TOXIC

Want more information?
Contact your healthcare provider,
local health department
or the

*Michigan Department
of Community Health*



Jennifer M. Granholm, Governor
Janet Olszewski, Director

1-800-MI-TOXIC
1-800-648-6942

www.michigan.gov/mdch-toxic

Funding for this project has
been provided by:
Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network
www.saginawbaywin.org

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A Family Guide to Eating Fish



**This guide is for
you if:**

**You eat fish from Michigan's
lakes or rivers**

**You eat fish from grocery
stores or restaurants**

You have young children

You may become pregnant

Michigan's residents have many opportunities to enjoy catching and eating fish. Fish are healthy sources of protein and provide important nutrients for children, pregnant women, and adults. However some fish contain harmful toxic chemicals. This guide provides information needed to make healthy choices for cooking and eating fish.

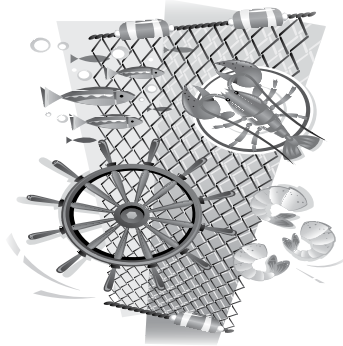
Is eating fish healthy
for me and my family?
Yes!!

- ✓ Fish are a great source of protein, vitamins, and minerals.
- ✓ The oils found in fish are important for unborn and breast-fed babies and children.
- ✓ Fish is low in saturated fat.
- ✓ Fish can help prevent heart disease in adults.
- ✓ Following the preparation guidelines found on the next page will greatly reduce your exposure to unwanted chemicals found in fish, except for mercury. Cooking and trimming will not remove mercury from fish. Most chemicals collect in the fat of the fish. Mercury does not store in fat and cannot be removed by cooking or cleaning.



Why are some fish unsafe to eat?

Many lakes, rivers, and oceans contain mercury and other chemical pollution. Some chemical pollutants can be found in a fish's body. These chemicals found in fish can be harmful to you and your family if eaten too often. The chemicals can stay in your body for days, months or years.



Who is at greatest risk from eating the wrong kinds of fish too often?

- ▶ Breast-fed babies
- ▶ Unborn babies
- ▶ Children under the age of 15
- ▶ Individuals with certain chronic health problems

What health problems can these chemicals cause?

- ▶ Some chemicals can harm developing brains and nervous systems, slowing a child's physical, mental and behavioral development.
- ▶ Some chemicals can damage immune systems, cause changes in liver function, or cause cancer.

How can I choose fish that are lower in chemicals and health risks?

- ✓ Limit your meals of fish that eat other fish. They are likely to contain more mercury or other contaminants.
- ✓ Avoid fish that the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) says contain too much mercury.
 - Don't eat shark, tilefish, king mackerel or swordfish. They are high in mercury.
 - Use the Michigan Department of Community Health list of low mercury fish from the ***Avoid Mercury in Fish and Seafood Shopping and Restaurant Guide***
- ✓ Select smaller, younger fish. Larger and older fish collect more contaminants than younger and smaller fish.
- ✓ Most chemicals collect in fat. Avoid fatty fish like carp and catfish from contaminated waters.
 - Check the ***Michigan Family Fish Consumption Guide*** for fish that are low in contamination, available at www.michigan.gov/mdch-toxic

